United Nations A/C.3/65/L.18

General Assembly

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13 October 2010

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Sixty-fifth session
Third Committee
Agenda item 28 (a)
Advancement of women

Malawi:* draft resolution

Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 62/138 of 18 December 2007 and 63/158 of 18 December 2008 on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"[2] and the declaration adopted at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,[3]

Reaffirming also the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as well as those made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[4] and at the 2005 World Summit,[5]

Reaffirming further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[6] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[7] and

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the African Group.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232.

[4] See resolution 55/2.

[5] See resolution 60/1.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[7] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

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urging States that have not done so to consider, as a matter of priority, signing, ratifying or acceding to those Conventions and the Optional Protocols thereto,[8]

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula,[9] and welcoming the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Stressing the interlinkages among poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child, violence against young women and girls and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, and that poverty remains the main social risk factor,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that early pregnancy and early childbearing entail complications during pregnancy and delivery and a much higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, and deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, including in the area of emergency obstetric care, cause high levels of obstetric fistula and other maternal morbidities, as well as maternal mortality,

Recognizing further the serious immediate and long-term implications for health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and the negative impact on psychological, social and economic development that violence against the girl child and adolescent girls represents for individuals, families, communities and States,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access by girls to education and nutrition, reduced physical and mental health and enjoyment by girls of fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence compared with boys, and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices,

Welcoming the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula, bearing in mind that a people-centred approach to social and economic development is fundamental for protecting and empowering individuals and communities,

Welcoming also the outcome document of the high-level plenary meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals",[10] in particular the references to Millennium Development Goal 5,

Taking note with appreciation of the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health launched on 22 September 2010 and the support expressed by Member States, the international community, civil society and the private sector for the Strategy,

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[8] Ibid., vol. 2131, No. 20378; and ibid., vols. 2171 and 2173, No. 27531.

[9] A/63/222.

[10] See resolution 65/1.

Welcoming ongoing partnerships between stakeholders at all levels to address the multifaceted determinants of maternal, newborn and child health and the commitments announced during the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals to accelerate progress on the health-related Millennium Development Goals,

Acknowledging the renewed and reinforced commitments made by Member States for achieving Millennium Development Goal 5,

1. *Recognizes* the interlinkages among poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, that poverty remains the main social risk factor, that the eradication of poverty is critical to meeting the needs and protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls and that continued urgent national and international action is required to eliminate it;

2. *Stresses* the need to address the social issues that contribute to the problem of obstetric fistula, such as early marriage of the girl child, early pregnancy, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health, lack of or inadequate education of women and girls, poverty and the low status of women and girls;

3. *Also stresses* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, that they must exercise due diligence in order to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to provide protection to the victims, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls;

4. *Calls upon* States to take all necessary measures to ensure the right of women and girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and develop sustainable health systems and social services, with a view to ensuring access to such systems and services without discrimination, while paying special attention to adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation, family planning information, increasing knowledge and awareness and securing appropriate prenatal and post-natal care for the prevention of obstetric fistula;

5. *Also calls upon* States to ensure that women and girls have equal access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality and that they complete their education at that level, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand girls' and women's education at all levels, including at the secondary and higher levels, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication;

6. *Urges* States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

7. *Calls upon* the international community to support the activities of the United Nations Population Fund and other partners in the global Campaign to End Fistula, including the World Health Organization, in establishing and financing national and regional fistula treatment and training centres by identifying and

supporting health facilities that have the potential to serve as centres for treatment, training and convalescent care;

8. *Also calls upon* States to accelerate progress in order to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 by addressing reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health in a comprehensive manner through, inter alia, the provision of family planning, prenatal care, skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric and newborn care and methods of prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, such as HIV, within strengthened health systems that provide accessible and affordable integrated health-care services and include community-based preventive and clinical care, as also reflected in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals",[10] and the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health;

9. *Further calls upon* States and/or the relevant funds and programmes, organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector:

(a) To redouble their efforts to meet the internationally agreed goal of improving maternal health by making maternal health services and obstetric fistula treatment geographically and financially accessible, including by increasing access to skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric care and appropriate prenatal and post-natal care;

(b) To develop, implement and support national and international prevention, care and treatment and socio-economic reintegration and support strategies, as appropriate, to address effectively the condition of obstetric fistula and to develop further a multisectoral, multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated approach in order to bring about lasting solutions and put an end to obstetric fistula, maternal mortality and related morbidities, including through ensuring access to affordable, comprehensive, quality maternal health-care services, including skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care;

(c) To strengthen the capacity of health systems, in particular public health systems, to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that do occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to young women and girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

(d) To strengthen research, monitoring and evaluation systems, including community-based notification of obstetric fistula cases and maternal and newborn deaths, to guide the implementation of maternal health programmes;

(e) To provide essential health services, equipment and supplies and skills training and income-generating projects to women and girls so that they can break out of the cycle of poverty;

(f) To mobilize funding to provide free or subsidized fistula repairs, including through encouraging more networking among providers and the sharing of new treatment techniques and protocols;

(g) To improve data collection, pre- and post-surgery, to measure progress in addressing the needs for surgical treatment and the quality of surgery, rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration services;

(h) To provide health education, rehabilitation and reintegration counselling, including medical counselling, as key components of post-operative care to all women after fistula repair, including to those with irreparable cases;

(i) To bring obstetric fistula to the attention of policymakers and communities, thereby reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with it and helping women and girls suffering from obstetric fistula so that they can overcome abandonment and social exclusion together with the psychosocial implications thereof through, inter alia, the support of social reintegration projects;

(j) To educate individual women and men, girls and boys, communities, policymakers and health professionals about how obstetric fistula can be prevented and treated, to increase awareness of the needs of pregnant women and girls, including their right to the highest attainable standard of health, by working with community and religious leaders, traditional birth attendants, the media, radio stations, influential public figures and policymakers; to support the training of doctors, midwives, nurses and other health workers in lifesaving obstetric care; and to include training on fistula repair, treatment and care as a standard element of the training curricula of health professionals;

(k) To develop means of transportation and financing that enable women and girls to access obstetric care and treatment, and provide incentives and other means to secure the presence in rural areas of qualified health professionals who are able to perform interventions to prevent obstetric fistula;

10. *Encourages* communication and networking among existing fistula centres to facilitate training, research, advocacy and fund-raising and the development and application of relevant standards, including *Obstetric Fistula: Guiding Principles for Clinical Management and Programme Development*, published in 2006 by the World Health Organization, which provides background information and principles for developing fistula prevention and treatment strategies and programmes;

11. *Urges* the international community to address the shortages of doctors, midwives, nurses and other health workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, that limit the capacity of most fistula centres;

12. *Also urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reaches young women and girls, in particular in rural and remote areas;

13. *Invites* Member States to contribute to efforts to end obstetric fistula, including, in particular, the global Campaign to End Fistula of the United Nations Population Fund, with the goal of eliminating obstetric fistula by 2015, in line with the targets of the Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

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Sixty-fifth session
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Agenda item 28 (a)
Advancement of women

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malawi,* Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Micronesia (Federated States of), Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Myanmar, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Kitts and Nevis, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor Leste, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and Viet Nam: revised draft resolution

Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 62/138 of 18 December 2007 and 63/158 of 18 December 2008 on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"[2] and the

* On behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of African States.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[2] Resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

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declaration adopted at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,[3]

Reaffirming also the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as well as those made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[4] and at the 2005 World Summit,[5]

Reaffirming further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[6] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[7] and urging States that have not done so to consider, as a matter of priority, signing, ratifying or acceding to those Conventions and the Optional Protocols thereto,[8]

Taking note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula,[9] and welcoming the conclusions and recommendations contained therein,

Stressing the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child, violence against young women and girls and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, and that poverty remains the main social risk factor,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that early pregnancy and early childbearing entail complications during pregnancy and delivery and a much higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, and deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, including in the area of emergency obstetric care, cause high levels of obstetric fistula and other maternal morbidities, as well as maternal mortality,

Recognizing further the serious immediate and long-term implications for health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and the negative impact on psychological, social and economic development that violence against the girl child and adolescent girls represents for individuals, families, communities and States,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access by girls to education and nutrition, reduced physical and mental health and enjoyment by girls of fewer of

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[3] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; see also Economic and Social Council decision 2005/232.

[4] See resolution 55/2.

[5] See resolution 60/1.

[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

[7] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[8] Ibid., vol. 2131, No. 20378; and ibid., vols. 2171 and 2173, No. 27531.

[9] A/65/268.

the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence compared with boys, and in their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices,

Welcoming the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula, bearing in mind that a people-centred approach to social and economic development is fundamental for protecting and empowering individuals and communities,

Welcoming also the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals",[10] in particular the references to Millennium Development Goal 5,

Welcoming further the Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, undertaken by a broad coalition of partners, in support of national plans and strategies aimed at significantly reducing the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths as a matter of immediate concern by scaling up a priority package of high-impact interventions and integrating efforts in sectors such as health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, poverty reduction and nutrition,

Welcoming the various national, regional and international initiatives on all the Millennium Development Goals, including those undertaken bilaterally and through South-South cooperation, in support of national plans and strategies in sectors such as health, education, gender equality, energy, water and sanitation, poverty reduction and nutrition as a way to reduce the number of maternal, newborn and under-five child deaths,

Welcoming also ongoing partnerships between stakeholders at all levels to address the multifaceted determinants of maternal, newborn and child health in close coordination with Member States based on their needs and priorities and the commitments announced during the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals to accelerate progress on the health-related Millennium Development Goals,

Reaffirming the renewed and reinforced commitments made by Member States for achieving Millennium Development Goal 5,

1. *Recognizes* the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, that poverty remains the main social risk factor, that the eradication of poverty is critical to meeting the needs and protecting and promoting the rights of women and girls and that continued urgent national and international action is required to eliminate it;

2. *Stresses* the need to address the social issues that contribute to the problem of obstetric fistula, such as early marriage of the girl child, early pregnancy, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health, lack of or inadequate education of women and girls, poverty and the low status of women and girls;

3. *Also stresses* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, that they must exercise

[10] See resolution 65/1.

due diligence in order to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to provide protection to the victims, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

4. *Calls upon* States to take all necessary measures to ensure the right of women and girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and develop sustainable health systems and social services, with a view to ensuring access to such systems and services without discrimination, while paying special attention to adequate food and nutrition, water and sanitation, family planning information, increasing knowledge and awareness and securing appropriate prenatal and post-natal care for the prevention of obstetric fistula;

5. *Also calls upon* States to ensure the right to education for women and girls, of good quality, on an equal basis with men and boys, and to ensure that they complete a full course of primary education, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand girls' and women's education at all levels, including at the secondary and higher levels, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication;

6. *Urges* States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

7. *Calls upon* the international community to support the activities of the United Nations Population Fund and other partners in the global Campaign to End Fistula, including the World Health Organization, in establishing and financing regional fistula treatment and training centres, and where necessary national centres, by identifying and supporting health facilities that have the potential to serve as centres for treatment, training and convalescent care;

8. *Also calls upon* States to accelerate progress in order to achieve Millennium Development Goal 5 and its two targets by addressing reproductive, maternal, newborn and child health in a comprehensive manner through, inter alia, the provision of family planning, prenatal care, skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric and newborn care and methods of prevention and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases and infections, such as HIV, within strengthened health systems that provide accessible and affordable integrated health-care services and include community-based preventive and clinical care, as also reflected in the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixty-fifth session of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, "Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals",[10] and the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health;

9. *Further calls upon* States and/or the relevant funds and programmes, organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector:

(a) To redouble their efforts to meet the internationally agreed goal of improving maternal health by making maternal health services and obstetric fistula treatment geographically and financially accessible, including by increasing access to skilled attendance at birth, emergency obstetric care and appropriate prenatal and post-natal care;

(b) To develop, implement and support national and international prevention, care and treatment and socio-economic reintegration and support strategies, as appropriate, to address effectively the condition of obstetric fistula and to develop further a multisectoral, multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated approach in order to bring about lasting solutions and put an end to obstetric fistula, maternal mortality and related morbidities, including through ensuring access to affordable, comprehensive, quality maternal health-care services, including skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care;

(c) To strengthen the capacity of health systems, in particular public health systems, to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that do occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to young women and girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

(d) To strengthen research, monitoring and evaluation systems, including community-based notification of obstetric fistula cases and maternal and newborn deaths, to guide the implementation of maternal health programmes;

(e) To provide essential health services, equipment and supplies and skills training and income-generating projects to women and girls so that they can break out of the cycle of poverty;

(f) To mobilize funding to provide free or subsidized fistula repairs, including through encouraging more networking among providers and the sharing of new treatment techniques and protocols;

(g) To improve data collection, pre- and post-surgery, to measure progress in addressing the needs for surgical treatment and the quality of surgery, rehabilitation and socio-economic reintegration services, including post-surgery prospects for successful subsequent pregnancies, live birth and severe health-related complications so as to address the challenges for improving maternal health;

(h) To provide health education, rehabilitation and reintegration counselling, including medical counselling, as key components of post-operative care to all women after fistula treatment, including to those with irreparable cases;

(i) To bring obstetric fistula to the attention of policymakers and communities, thereby reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with it and helping women and girls suffering from obstetric fistula so that they can overcome abandonment and social exclusion together with the psychosocial implications thereof through, inter alia, the support of social reintegration projects;

(j) To educate individual women and men, girls and boys, communities, policymakers and health professionals about how obstetric fistula can be prevented and treated, and increase awareness of the needs of pregnant women and girls, as well as those who have undergone surgical fistula repair, including their right to the highest attainable standard of health, by working with community and religious

leaders, traditional birth attendants, women and girls who have suffered from fistula, the media, radio stations, influential public figures and policymakers, support the training of doctors, midwives, nurses and other health workers in lifesaving obstetric care, and include training on fistula repair, treatment and care as a standard element of the training curricula of health professionals;

(k) To develop means of transportation and financing that enable women and girls to access obstetric care and treatment, and provide incentives and other means to secure the presence in rural areas of qualified health professionals who are able to perform interventions to prevent obstetric fistula;

10. Encourages communication and networking among existing fistula centres to facilitate training, research, advocacy and fund-raising and the development and application of relevant standards, including *Obstetric Fistula: Guiding Principles for Clinical Management and Programme Development*, published in 2006 by the World Health Organization, which provides background information and principles for developing fistula prevention and treatment strategies and programmes;

11. *Urges* the international community to address the shortages of doctors, midwives, nurses and other health workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, that limit the capacity of most fistula centres;

12. *Also urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reaches young women and girls, in particular in rural and remote areas;

13. *Invites* Member States to contribute to efforts to end obstetric fistula, including, in particular, the United Nations Population Fund global Campaign to End Fistula, with the goal of eliminating obstetric fistula by 2015, in line with the targets of the Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health;

14. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

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General Assembly

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13 October 2010

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Sixty-fifth session
Third Committee
Agenda item 28 (a)
Advancement of women

Gabon: draft resolution

International Widows' Day

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its relevant resolutions, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1] as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[3] the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, and, in particular, the agreed conclusions from the forty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women endorsing the eradication of poverty through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[4] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995,

Recalling also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5] in particular article 3, according to which parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women,

Affirming that ensuring and promoting the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women is critical to achieving internationally agreed development goals,

Recognizing that widowed women and their children are particularly vulnerable to discrimination, prejudice and social isolation, HIV/AIDS and poverty,

[1] Resolution 55/2.
[2] Resolution 217 A (III).
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.
[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

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Deeply concerned that millions of widows' children face illiteracy, loss of schooling, human trafficking and malnutrition,

Noting that the abuse and suffering of widows affects women worldwide,

Emphasizing the need to give special recognition to the plight of widows and their children, including those living in rural areas,

1. *Decides* with effect from 2011 to observe International Widows' Day on 23 June each year;

2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, to afford special recognition to the situation of widows and their children;

3. *Invites* all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society, to observe International Widows' Day and to raise awareness of the plight of widows and their children around the world;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take necessary measures for United Nations observance of that Day.

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Advancement of women

Angola, Benin, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of the Congo, El Salvador, Eritrea, Gabon, Grenada, Guinea, Haiti, Honduras, Israel, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Morocco, Senegal, Sudan, Timor-Leste, Togo and United States of America: revised draft resolution

International Widows' Day

The General Assembly,

Recalling all its relevant resolutions, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[1] as well as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,[2] the Convention on the Rights of the Child,[3] the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, and, in particular, the agreed conclusions from the forty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women endorsing the eradication of poverty through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[4] adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995,

Recalling also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[5] in particular article 3, according to which parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women,

Affirming that ensuring and promoting the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women is critical to achieving all internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

[1] Resolution 55/2.
[2] Resolution 217 A (III).
[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[4] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.
[5] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

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Emphasizing that the economic empowerment of women, including widows, is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that all aspects of the lives of widowed women and their children are, in many parts of the world, negatively affected by various economic, social and cultural factors, including, inter alia, lack of access to inheritance, land tenure, employment and/or livelihood, social safety nets, health care and education,

Recognizing the link existing between the situation of widows and that of their children,

Deeply concerned that millions of widows' children face hunger, malnutrition, child labour, difficult access to health care, water, sanitation, loss of schooling, illiteracy and human trafficking,

Reaffirming that women, including widowed women, should be an integral part of the society in the State where they reside, and recalling the importance of positive steps on the part of Member States to that end,

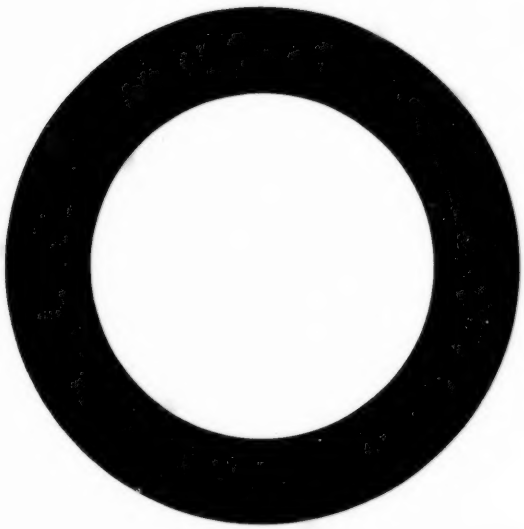
Emphasizing the need to give special attention to the situation of widows and their children, including those living in rural areas,

1. *Decides* with effect from 2011 to observe International Widows' Day on 23 June each year;

2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, to give special attention to the situation of widows and their children;

3. *Invites* all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society, to observe International Widows' Day and to raise awareness of the situation of widows and their children around the world;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take necessary measures, within existing resources, for the observance by the United Nations of that Day.



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Advancement of women

Philippines: draft resolution

Trafficking in women and girls

The General Assembly,

Recalling all international conventions that deal specifically with the problem of trafficking in women and girls, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and the Optional Protocol thereto,[2] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] and the Optional Protocol thereto on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[4] the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others,[5] the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[6] and the Protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[7] and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[8] as well as previous resolutions of the General Assembly and its subsidiary body the Human Rights Council, and the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions on the issue,

Reaffirming the provisions pertaining to trafficking in women and girls contained in the outcome documents of relevant international conferences and summits, in particular the strategic objective on the issue of trafficking contained in

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.
[2] Ibid., vol. 2131, No. 20378.
[3] Ibid., vol. 1577, No. 27531.
[4] Ibid., vol. 2171, No. 27531.
[5] Ibid., vol. 96, No. 1342.
[6] Ibid., vol. 2225, No. 39574.
[7] Ibid., vol. 2237, No. 39574.
[8] Ibid., vol. 2241, No. 39574.

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the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,[9]

Reaffirming also the commitment made by world leaders at the Millennium Summit and the 2005 World Summit to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons to counter the demand for trafficked victims and to protect the victims,

Recalling the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons[10] and its strong condemnation of trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which constitutes a serious threat to human dignity, human rights and development, the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, as well as the information that deals with trafficking in women and girls contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women,[11]

Recalling also the "Global report on trafficking in persons" of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime of February 2009 and the attention paid in it to the situation of trafficked women and girls,

Taking note of the Vienna Forum to Fight Human Trafficking, held from 13 to 15 February 2008, within the framework of the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, and of the thematic debate on the issue of trafficking in persons, held on 3 June 2008, within the framework of the General Assembly,

Taking note also of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and of the fact that part of her task is to integrate a gender and age specific perspective throughout the work of her mandate, inter alia, through the identification of gender- and age-specific vulnerabilities in relation to the issue of trafficking in persons,

Acknowledging the inclusion of gender-related crimes in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,[12] which entered into force on 1 July 2002,

Bearing in mind that all States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish perpetrators of trafficking in persons, and to rescue victims as well as provide for their protection, and that not doing so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the victims,

Seriously concerned that an increasing number of women and girls from some developing countries and countries with economies in transition are being trafficked to developed countries, as well as within and between regions and States, and that men and boys are also victims of trafficking, including for sexual exploitation,

Recognizing that certain efforts against trafficking in persons lack the gender and age sensitivity needed to address effectively the situation of women and girls,

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[9] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[10] Resolution 64/293, annex.

[11] A/61/122 and Add.1 and Add.1/Corr.1.

[12] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2187, No. 38544.

who are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, forced labour, services and other forms of exploitation, thus highlighting the need to incorporate a gender- and age-sensitive approach in all anti-trafficking efforts,

Recognizing also the need to address the impact of globalization on the particular problem of trafficking in women and children, in particular girls,

Recognizing further the challenges to combating trafficking in women and girls owing to the lack of adequate legislation and implementation of existing legislation, the lack of availability of reliable sex-disaggregated data and statistics, and the lack of resources,

Concerned about the use of new information technologies, including the Internet, for purposes of exploitation of the prostitution of others, for trafficking in women as brides, for sex tourism exploiting women and children and for child pornography, paedophilia and any other forms of sexual exploitation of children,

Concerned also about the increasing activities of transnational criminal organizations and others that profit from international trafficking in persons, especially women and children, without regard to dangerous and inhuman conditions and in flagrant violation of domestic laws and international standards,

Recognizing that victims of trafficking are particularly exposed to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and that women and girl victims are often subject to multiple forms of discrimination and violence, including on the grounds of their gender, age, ethnicity, culture and religion, as well as their origins, and that these forms of discrimination themselves may fuel trafficking in persons,

Noting that some of the demand for prostitution and forced labour is met by trafficking in persons in some parts of the world,

Acknowledging that women and girl victims of trafficking, on account of their gender, are further disadvantaged and marginalized by a general lack of information or awareness and recognition of their human rights and by the stigmatization often associated with trafficking, as well as by the obstacles they meet in gaining access to information and recourse mechanisms in cases of violation of their rights, and that special measures are required for their protection and to increase their awareness,

Reaffirming the importance of bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms and initiatives, including information exchanges on best practices, of Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children,

Reaffirming also that global efforts, including international cooperation and technical assistance programmes, to eradicate trafficking in persons, especially women and children, demand the strong political commitment, shared responsibility and active cooperation of all Governments of countries of origin, transit and destination,

Recognizing that policies and programmes for prevention, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration should be developed through a gender- and

age-sensitive, comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, with concern for the security of the victims and respect for the full enjoyment of their human rights and with the involvement of all actors in countries of origin, transit and destination,

Convinced of the need to protect and assist all victims of trafficking, with full respect for the human rights of the victims,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on trafficking in women and girls;[13]

2. *Welcomes* the efforts of Governments, United Nations bodies and agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls, and encourages them to further enhance their efforts and cooperation, including by sharing their knowledge, technical expertise and best practices as widely as possible;

3. *Encourages* the United Nations to mainstream the issue of trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, into its broader policies and programmes aimed at addressing economic and social development, human rights, the rule of law, good governance, education and natural disaster and post-conflict reconstruction;

4 *Calls upon* Governments to discourage, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters the trafficking of women and girls for all forms of exploitation, and in this regard to enhance preventive measures, including legislative measures, to deter exploiters of trafficked persons, as well as ensure their accountability;

5. *Also calls upon* Governments to take appropriate measures to address the factors that increase vulnerability to being trafficked, including poverty and gender inequality, as well as other factors that encourage the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriage and forced labour, in order to prevent and eliminate such trafficking, including by strengthening existing legislation with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and to punishing perpetrators, including public officials involved with trafficking circles, through both criminal and civil measures;

6. *Calls upon* Governments, the international community and all other organizations and entities that deal with conflict and post-conflict, disaster and other emergency situations to address the heightened vulnerability of women and girls to trafficking and exploitation, and associated gender-based violence;

7. *Urges* Governments to devise, enforce and strengthen effective gender- and age-sensitive measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy that integrates a human rights perspective, and to draw up, as appropriate, national action plans in this regard;

8. *Urges* Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to support and allocate resources to strengthen preventive action, in particular education for women and men, as well as for girls and boys, on gender equality, self-respect and mutual respect, and campaigns,

[13] A/65/209.

carried out in collaboration with civil society, to increase public awareness of the issue at the national and grass-roots levels;

9. *Encourages* Governments to take appropriate measures to eliminate sex tourism demand, especially of children, through all possible preventive actions;

10. *Urges* Governments to develop educational and training programmes and policies and consider, as appropriate, enacting legislation aimed at preventing sex tourism and trafficking, giving special emphasis to the protection of young women and children;

11. *Also urges* Governments to consider signing and ratifying and States parties to implement relevant United Nations legal instruments, such as the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime[6] and the Protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,[7] the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[1] and the Optional Protocol thereto[2] and the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] and the Optional Protocol thereto on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,[4] as well as the Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, 1930 (Convention No. 29), the Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958 (Convention No. 111) and the Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (Convention No. 182), of the International Labour Organization;

12. *Encourages* Member States to strengthen national programmes and to engage in bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation, including by forging regional initiatives or plans of action,[14] to address the problem of trafficking in persons through, inter alia, the enhancement of information-sharing, gender- and age-specific data collection and other technical capacities, and mutual legal assistance, as well as the combating of corruption and laundering of proceeds derived from trafficking, including for purposes of commercial sexual exploitation, and to ensure that such agreements and initiatives are particularly responsive to the problem of trafficking as it affects women and girls;

13. *Calls upon* all Governments to criminalize all forms of trafficking in persons, recognizing its increasing occurrence for purposes of sexual exploitation, commercial sexual exploitation and abuse, sex tourism and forced labour, and to bring to justice and punish the offenders and intermediaries involved, including

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[14] Such as the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime, the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative against Trafficking, the Action Plan for the Asia-Pacific region of the Asian Regional Initiative against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (see A/C.3/55/3, annex), the initiatives of the European Union on a comprehensive European policy and programmes on trafficking in human beings, as expressed most recently in the European Union plan on best practices, standards and procedures for combating and preventing trafficking in human beings, adopted in December 2005, the activities of the Council of Europe and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution, the Organization of American States Meeting of National Authorities on Trafficking in Persons, and the activities of the International Labour Organization and the International Organization for Migration in this field.

public officials involved in trafficking circles, whether local or foreign, through the competent national authorities, either in the country of origin of the offender or in the country in which the abuse occurs, in accordance with due process of law, as well as to penalize persons in authority found guilty of sexually assaulting victims of trafficking in their custody;

14. *Urges* Governments to take all appropriate measures to ensure that victims of trafficking are not penalized for being trafficked and that they do not suffer from revictimization as a result of actions taken by government authorities, and encourages Governments to prevent, within their legal framework and in accordance with national policies, victims of trafficking in persons from being prosecuted for their illegal entry or residence;

15. *Invites* Governments to consider setting up or strengthening a national coordinating mechanism, for example, a national rapporteur or an inter-agency body, with the participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to encourage the exchange of information and to report on data, root causes, factors and trends in violence against women, in particular trafficking, and to include data disaggregated by sex and age;

16. *Encourages* Governments and relevant United Nations bodies, within existing resources, to take appropriate measures to raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls; to discourage, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour; to publicize the laws, regulations and penalties relating to this issue; and to emphasize that trafficking is a serious crime;

17. *Calls upon* concerned Governments to allocate resources, as appropriate, to provide comprehensive programmes for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking, including through job training, legal assistance in a language that they can understand and health care, including for HIV/AIDS, and by taking measures to cooperate with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to provide for the social, medical and psychological care of the victims;

18. *Encourages* Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to undertake or strengthen campaigns aimed at clarifying opportunities, limitations and rights in the event of migration, as well as information on the risks of irregular migration and the ways and means used by traffickers, so as to enable women to make informed decisions and to prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking;

19. *Encourages* Governments to intensify collaboration with non-governmental organizations to develop and implement gender- and age-sensitive programmes for effective counselling, training and reintegration into society of victims of trafficking and programmes that provide shelter and helplines to victims or potential victims;

20. *Urges* Governments to provide or strengthen training for law enforcement, judicial, immigration and other relevant officials in the prevention and combating of trafficking in persons, including the sexual exploitation of women and girls, and in this regard calls upon Governments to ensure that the treatment of victims of trafficking, especially by law enforcers, immigration officers, consular officials, social workers and other first response officials, is conducted with full

respect for the human rights of those victims and with gender and age sensitivity, and observes the principles of non-discrimination, including the prohibition of racial discrimination;

21. *Invites* Governments to take steps to ensure that criminal justice procedures and witness protection programmes are sensitive to the particular situation of trafficked women and girls and that they are supported and assisted, as appropriate, in making complaints to the police or other authorities without fear and being available when required by the criminal justice system, and to ensure that during this time they have access to gender- and age-sensitive protection and, as appropriate, social, medical, financial and legal assistance, including the possibility of obtaining compensation for damages suffered;

22. *Also invites* Governments to encourage media providers, including Internet service providers, to adopt or strengthen self-regulatory measures to promote the responsible use of media, particularly the Internet, with a view to eliminating the exploitation of women and children, in particular girls, which could foster trafficking;

23. *Invites* the business sector, in particular the tourism and telecommunications industries, including mass media organizations, to cooperate with Governments in eliminating trafficking in women and children, in particular girls, including through the dissemination by the media of information regarding the dangers of trafficking, the rights of trafficked persons and the services available to victims of trafficking;

24. *Stresses* the need for the systematic collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data and comprehensive studies at both the national and the international levels and the development of common methodologies and internationally defined indicators to make it possible to develop relevant and comparable figures, and encourages Governments to enhance information-sharing and data-collection capacity as a way of promoting cooperation to combat the trafficking problem;

25. *Invites* Governments, United Nations bodies, agencies and special mechanisms, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to undertake collaborative and joint research and studies on trafficking in women and girls that can serve as a basis for policy formulation or change;

26. *Invites* Governments, with the support of the United Nations, when necessary, and other intergovernmental organizations, taking into account best practices, to formulate training manuals and other informational materials and provide training for law enforcement, judicial and other relevant officers, and medical and support personnel, with a view to sensitizing them to the special needs of women and girl victims;

27. *Encourages* Governments, relevant intergovernmental bodies and international organizations to ensure that military, peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel deployed in conflict, post-conflict and other emergency situations are provided training on conduct that does not promote, facilitate or exploit trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual exploitation, and to raise the awareness of such personnel of the potential risks to victims of conflict and other emergency situations, including natural disasters, of being trafficked;

28. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,[1] the Convention on the Rights of the Child[3] and the International Covenants on Human Rights[15] to include information and statistics on trafficking in women and girls as part of their national reports to their respective committees and to work towards developing a common methodology and statistics to obtain comparable data;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session a report that compiles successful interventions and strategies, as well as the gaps, in addressing the gender dimensions of the problem of trafficking in persons, and provides recommendations on the strengthening of a human rights-based gender- and age-sensitive approaches within the various aspects of efforts to address trafficking in persons.

[15] Resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex.